

TRANSCRIPT May 16, 2008

MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL

PRESENT

Councilmember Michael Knapp, President Councilmember Roger Berliner Councilmember Valerie Ervin Councilmember George Leventhal Councilmember Phil Andrews, Vice President Councilmember Marc Elrich Councilmember Nancy Floreen Councilmember Duchy Trachtenberg



May 16, 2008

1 President Knapp,

2 Good morning, everyone. I want to welcome everybody back. When last we left our 3 discussion, we had many questions left to be answered. Fortunately, I think the Council 4 has answered many of them. And so I am very [inaudible] with the assistance of many 5 of you in the room, and I'm very appreciative of your efforts. I really want to say thank you to everyone that is here, those who support the people who are here. I think this 6 7 has been a, as it often is, a long discussion as it relates to the budget. Often the budget 8 is a slow jog and then a sprint to the finish in many respects. This year it's been a 9 marathon that we've run at top speed, which makes it a little more interesting. So I know 10 everyone is tired, but I think the end is, in fact, in sight. As we learned yesterday, we 11 were close to an agreement. Out of a \$4 billion budget we were down to our --12 effectively our finally \$20 million in reductions. And given the challenges that we faced 13 going into the budget, and potentially some of the economic challenges we face in the upcoming year, that's not too bad. I think we can get there, and I think we can do it in a 14 15 fiscally and morally responsible way. We had a lively session yesterday. I think we'll be, 16 hopefully, not quite as lively today. But I think it's important that the conversations the Council had last night were fruitful and successful. And so what I think what we have 17 before us today is a proposal that addresses the concerns of -- I hope -- the eight 18 19 Councilmembers you see before us, and also meet the needs of our residents and of 20 our employees. I have distributed to Councilmembers, I don't know -- have others seen 21 this yet? Okay. What the Council will present today, or what I will present is a proposal 22 that will reduce the amount of property tax proposed by the County Executive by \$20 23 million. We will keep the property tax rates at -- propose to keep the property tax rates at the current level, so no reduction but no increase. And provide a credit to owner-24 25 occupied homes of \$579, which is a little bit less than the credit the Council provided 26 our property owners last year. We will reduce expenditures and change resources in the 27 following way: we will assume \$8 million each from County Government and Montgomery County Public Schools to be achieved by reducing employee and 28 29 personnel costs and securing productivity improves and increased efficiencies; and 30 each will report back to the Council about how these reductions will be achieved. And 31 \$1 million in fund balance from Montgomery College. \$3.5 million from the Council's 32 changes on May 15 to PAGO and the FY09 Capital Budget and resources for Park and 33 Planning. And that will be the modification to what the Council's actions have been 34 taken to date. There was a lot of discussion. There was a lot of talk last night. And I 35 think the important thing was that as is important in a legislative body, people work 36 towards each other, work towards consensus, and working with the community broadly 37 came to a very, I think, successful outcome. The budget that we -- I hopefully will 38 approve momentarily will have a -- will only grow by 2.9% in a tax-supported budget. 39 We are roughly \$9 million below in spending what the County Executive had 40 recommended. And the overall total tax -- overall budget is about 3.7%, but the tax-41 supported piece, which we have the most responsibility for, is only up 2.9%. When is 42 the last time that our budget grew at such a low rate?

Steve Farber

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May 16, 2008

I think it's been quite some time.

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President Knapp,

Quite some time. So I think that to our taxpayers, we can say that we have recognized the fiscal challenges that are out there and have risen to the occasion to meet them. By the same token, I think, as a number of colleagues said yesterday, we have also recognized the core services that our community requires, and made sure that we have provided the resources there, be they police officers in the streets, corrections officers in the correctional facility, our firefighters, our teachers, our service workers. We have done a job, I think, to get all of those addressed in a way that doesn't necessarily grow in the direction that we would like as quickly as we would like, but certainly keeps pace with where we need to be to make those core services available to our residents, while at the some time recognizing the fiscal challenges that we have. And so I am very thankful to all of my colleagues for their hard work late into the hours -- to the late hours last evening, and continuing early this morning. Thank all of you who have -- were assisting us in that process. And I present that budget proposal to my colleagues. [Inaudible] by Councilmember Leventhal. Any comments? Council Vice President Andrews.

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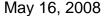
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Vice President Andrews,

Thank you, President Knapp. Well thank you for your good leadership in pulling the Council together. I think the extra day that the Council took to put this together was well worth it. It is a budget that is, I believe, significantly better than the budget that we considered yesterday. It provides significantly less impact on property taxpayers than what we considered yesterday. It will find savings in employee costs that will help close this gap. And we hope that those savings will be permanent savings. And this requires that the agencies to report back to us about how those will be achieved. I want to thank all my colleagues for all of the work that they did during this budget. People worked extremely hard, and I think the Council pulled together at the end. Everybody gave a little bit to come up with a package that I think everybody can live with, and that is better than what we had yesterday. It's important for the Council to act in that way. It's a Council that needs to work together closely and I believe we have. And we have produced a sound budget for this year given the circumstances that we face. We can expect that the coming year is going to be tough as well given the forecast, given what we hear from the State. And we're going to have to pull together again next year probably to make some hard choices. But I think this moves us in the right direction. We need to, I believe, keep pressure on the agencies to find efficiencies, to find savings, to look for ways to combine work done, and to look when a position becomes vacant as to whether it has to be filled. That has been an approach that has been used by the Council office successfully under Steve Farber's leadership, and the work years are actually reduced on the Council staff since Mr. Farber became staff director 15, 16, 17 years ago. So we want to encourage all agencies to look hard at whether programs should continue in their current form, whether all positions need to be filled when they become vacant. We've looked at the Executive's Retirement Savings Incentive, the





1 early retirement. And we need to be careful about spreading ourselves too thin. The 2 County Government has grown substantially in the last decade at a pace that can't be 3 sustain if the pay increases that people want are to be sustained; so there has to be real 4 hard work done to find those efficiencies. And I think this will help achieve that. I 5 appreciate, again, the work done by Council President Knapp on this. I know that he's looking forward after his trip to the Bond Rating agencies, as Councilmember 6 7 Trachtenberg is, to time to reflect and catch up on some sleep. But I think this budget is 8 a sound budget, and one that reflects the values of the community.

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President Knapp,

Thank you very much. Councilmember Leventhal.

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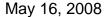
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Councilmember Leventhal,

Well, once again, good job, Mr. President. Thank you for the good work you've put in, the long hours you've put in. We all enjoy working with you. You have an easygoing personality, but a spine of steel when you need to. And we appreciate that. My friend, Mr. Berliner, said yesterday that he believes his constituents are angry. And I hope that the very fortunate residents of Bethesda Chevy Chase and Potomac will realize that they are among the luckiest people on earth. But I represent them too, and I hear anger from them as well. But many of the things that our constituents are angry about are things that are totally out of the control of the Montgomery County Council. I hear from a lot of constituents are angry about the war in Iraq. The United States is squandering hundreds of billions, more than a trillion dollars squandered on a huge mistake. And the resources that are going into building schools and infrastructure in Iraq and that are not coming here to Montgomery County to build schools and infrastructure are a scandal. And constituents are angry about rising gasoline prices. And constituents are angry about lowering property values. And really there isn't much that Montgomery County Council can do about any of those things. But our constituents know how to find us, and we return our phone calls. So my constituents can't complain to George Bush and Dick Cheney, but they can get to see me and they can get in to see Marc, and Nancy, and Duchy, and Mike, and Phil, and Roger, and Valerie. So we do catch the brunt of a lot of people's concerns that we may or may not be able to address. So we've worked very hard and we've had a lot of conversations over the last several hours. And we're bringing forward a budget that I think keeps faith with the people we represent, and meets our responsibilities. I'm very optimistic again, I referred to it yesterday when my friends Duchy and Mike and Ike go up to New York on Tuesday, that we'll maintain the very best bond rating that we can possibly get, because we have almost the very best local government that we can possibly have. Can it be better? Sure. We're going to continue to come up with good ideas. We're going to continue to seek efficiencies, as this budget requires both the school system and the Executive Branch to do. But we just have a very, very good local government here. And I want to be very clear that the budget we're voting on today honors the principle that a contract is a contract. We're not breaking the contracts. And that is a very important principle. When government makes a promise, our public should expect that the promise will be fulfilled. We've had a good





1 conversation over the last several hours. And we do agree we had a split yesterday, but 2 we do agree on several things. And one of the things that I think we agree on is that we 3 understand that in this round of contracts we have to honor the commitments that were 4 made. And in the next rounds of contracts we need to make certain that contracts are 5 negotiated with very serious concern about trajectory, about long-term sustainability. Those concerns are real. And we do have a contract negotiation process that is driven 6 7 by that half of the budget, the public schools, that don't have the responsibility to 8 balance the budget. And that's a real concern and it's a concern I've expressed before. 9 So we do need to make certain that when public school contracts, and all contracts, are 10 negotiated that all the branches of the local government, the schools and the County, are in close communication that the information that our economists have in County 11 12 Government is available to the school system, and that we think very, very hard about 13 trajectory and long-term sustainability. We agree on that. That's not an issue on which the Council is divided. I got an email in the middle of the night from one of my 14 15 constituents and one of our employees. And she thanked me and Councilmember Ervin 16 for the strong words of support that we had given to firefighters, police and bus drivers. And she said, don't forget the nurses and the social workers. And I think perhaps this 17 constituent didn't know that I'm chairman of the Health and Human Services Committee. 18 19 I want to really thank my colleagues for the strong support that budget provides for 20 health and human services. It's not a big growth year but we added money for 21 community clinics. We added money to provide flexibility for the frailest and neediest 22 elderly people to make sure that if the hours we're providing for in-home care are 23 inadequate that we'll address that. And we added money to make sure that those who are struggling with drug and alcohol addictions continue to have access to treatment 24 25 beds. And that's something we can feel good about. And we're implementing a Housing First approach to getting homeless people off the street that is going to require 26 27 measurable outcomes and measurable results. And so while the fortunate residents who have homes in Chevy Chase, Potomac and Bethesda are having a lower property 28 29 tax burden today than they might have had under the budget that we voted for 30 yesterday; this budget also makes sure that people who have no homes maybe have an 31 opportunity to get homes. So I'm going to vote for this budget. And we're all going to try 32 to get along. We had some disagreements on the Council. We had some things we 33 share in common. We're very fortunate to serve on this County Council. We're very 34 fortunate to live in this County. And every year when we pass the budget we have the 35 opportunity to remind ourselves, even if we sometimes get angry, just how fortunate we 36 really are.

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President Knapp,

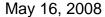
40 Councilmember Berliner.

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42 Councilmember Berliner,

Thank you, Council President. Councilmember Floreen remarked to me the other day that conflict is a good thing. And there's much truth in that observation, because conflict





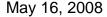
1 is an inherent part of human nature. But what is important isn't conflict, it's how we 2 resolve conflict that counts. And I think this last 20 hours has shown the best of this 3 Council and of this community in coming together and resolving conflict in a way that 4 really does find common ground, not at the lowest common denominator but at the 5 highest common denominator. And that should always be our goal. And I think this budget resolution reflects that. In 20 hours we came up with \$20 million in savings. Now 6 7 we probably can't do that every hour of the day, but at the end of the budget process to 8 make that kind of step forward on behalf of our burdened taxpayers, that's a good thing. 9 And that is a result of a divided Council having to grapple with how we can come 10 together. So I am pleased. I will support this budget. Like Chair Leventhal, this budget 11 does a lot of good things for a lot of people in a very difficult time. And it does honor our 12 contracts. So we've done well by our taxpayers. We've done well by our constituents. 13 We've done well by the most vulnerable among us who need our help. We've done well 14 by our students who need the best education we can possibly provide, and provide it year in and year out. And this Council is committed to doing so. So we have a lot to be 15 16 proud of in a difficult budget climate in which we had difficult choices to make. And we've got more savings that we have to achieve going forward, because next year isn't 17 going to be a pretty year. All indications are that this is not a one-year blip. The 18 19 economic forces at play nationally are not going to suddenly turn around. I wish they 20 would. I hope they do, but it's likely they won't, which means next year is going to be 21 hard and we're going to have hard conversations then. And we're going have to find 22 savings. A number of my colleagues have talked repeatedly about an effort that I hope 23 Chair Trachtenberg will take up and perhaps we could even have reflected in our final action a week from how. Councilmember Leventhal, Councilmember Elrich, among 24 25 others have talked about the need for institutionalizing that which MCGEO basically did 26 this year in terms of offering up suggestions for how workers can find ways to make 27 government more efficient. And we need to have that not on an ad hoc basis but on a permanent basis. And so we need an advisory committee composed of labor, of the 28 Executive Branch, of Council that will work on an ongoing basis and report back to us in 29 30 time for next year's budget on efficiencies that can be found. Because we must find 31 them, and we need the people who are there on the front line every day to be our eyes 32 and ears and to be the ones who can tell us this is where we can make savings. So I 33 hope that perhaps there is a procedure whereby when we vote next -- a week from 34 today on the final budget or a week from Thursday -- a week from yesterday, that we 35 could have some mechanism whereby that piece could be part of what we put in place. Council President and I thank my colleagues for their work on this budget. 36

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- President Knapp,
- 39 Councilmember Floreen.

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- 41 Councilmember Floreen,
- Thank you. Well my hat is off to our absolutely unflappable Council President. That is a personality trait that served you well, Mr. Knapp, and has really allowed eight really very different people with some very different priorities and perspectives to come to what I





1 believe is going to be a unanimous vote. And it is quite a compromise; it is. And so my 2 hat is off to everybody else here as well, as well as the folks in the room. You know I've 3 been saying since the get go that I thought the property tax rate increase that was 4 propose was untenable, and we've been able to eliminate. I think that's an excellent 5 thing. I've said from the get go, and I think most of us have agreed, we needed to reduce our spending. And we haven't reduced it as much as some of us would like, but 6 we've reduced it by \$10 million over what was proposed. And I think that is an excellent 7 8 thing. This is a great achievement for us. Where at the same time, we serve the various 9 constituencies that we all feel most passionately about; the health and human services 10 world, the education world, the public safety world. I think we're at a place that we can all be really quite proud of under the circumstances. It is perfect? Nothing we do is ever 11 12 perfect. Mr. Wyman, I know, is thinking of his comments to the Gazette on the subject. 13 But nonetheless I think it is a tremendous achievement that so many different views 14 have been brought together here. And I agree, and I'm glad Mr. Berliner was reminded of our conversation, because I think disagreement can get you real compromise in the 15 16 end. And I think that's we've achieved, and I think that speaks well for this full.

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President Knapp,

Councilmember Trachtenberg.

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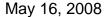
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Councilmember Trachtenberg,

Thank you, President Knapp. Well, what a difference that a day makes. Here we are this morning, and I would expect very fully that we have consensus and no easy accomplishment. I think what Councilmember Floreen indicated about eight different people with different experiences and different perspectives very much speaks to this body, but also it speaks to the spirit in which we've had this debate in the way and manner in which the decisions have been made. And I really want to underscore that because I think most of you out there, and even those watching had listening know that this has not been an easy process that there are many challenges; not just in terms of priorities but clearly we're poised for more difficult circumstances next year. In fact, my staff -- one of my staff members earlier today had a very sobering conversation with the State Controller, who indicated very clearly to him that he thought we were really facing and looking at more cuts through the State. Undoubtedly that's exactly the kind of environment that's going to have a trickle-down impact on this County and what this Council can do. And when you couple that with the irresponsible actions of our Federal Government, that's really the big reason we're in the pickle that we're in, where the burden on local government on county jurisdictions continues to grow. But a leap of faith is required here in those that serve, and also in the general public. And I think that's what this morning really is about. I would echo some of the concerns that were raised by Councilmember Leventhal about the equity and process. I certainly believe that when we're talking about sustainability, our fiscal sustainability, there's no way you can achieve that without having everyone at the table, with having transparent dialogue. And with those of us over here who have to make the hard decisions having a full understanding of the implications of different items that are negotiated and agreed to. I,





1 in the past few weeks, have very openly and publicly discussed labor management, an 2 initiative that I'd like to put forward. I know Councilmember Berliner mentioned it in his 3 remarks. I'm hopeful that over the course of the next few months this is something that 4 we can talk about within the committee that I chair. I feel very strongly about it because 5 in the final analysis, it's the people that really make the change. It's actually not about just the eight of us that are sitting up here this morning and the County Executive; it's 6 7 about all of you as well. I support the budget that's being proposed this morning 8 because it does precisely what I was concerned about from the very beginning, which is 9 it addresses the large property tax increase. And in effect, it eliminates it. And that was 10 where I was going in all of my remarks. So I'm very delighted about that. It also secures some operational savings, which I think are critical as well. And that's something I will --11 12 I can absolutely state for the record we'll be very happy to discuss with the bond rating 13 agencies next week, because I know that that's what they want to see; because they 14 know, like we know, that we are facing very difficult times in the not too distant future. And obviously, one of the reasons I support this as well is because I do believe that it 15 16 addresses the needs of the vulnerable here in Montgomery County. I am very excited about the fact that my colleagues have committed to maintaining the services that we 17 have, and even putting a little extra in there, certainly in the area of addiction services, 18 19 which I think you all know are quite important to me. And I've got a personal ambition in 20 this as well, because I very much look forward to the day when I can actually have my 21 son come home and receive the services here in the County that I really think he needs. 22 And that is a passion that I will continue to pursue as I sit here on the Council. Again, I 23 support what's being proposed this morning. And I look forward to the conversation that I know we will have with the Executive Branch around the savings that have been 24 25 identified. I also want to encourage union leadership to work with the County Executive 26 on that, and also to work with this body. And yesterday while I sat here, I quoted some 27 words that were shared with me by Councilmember Praisner. And I've got another one to share this morning. She often told me that I needed to keep my eyes on the prize. 28 29 And I'm going to encourage all of you and my colleagues to do the same. And the prize 30 -- our fiscal security, which ensures the wonderful quality of life that we are blessed to 31 enjoy here in Montgomery County.

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President Knapp.

Thank you. Councilmember Ervin.

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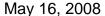
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Councilmember Ervin,

I want to start by thanking Mike Knapp -- President Mike Knapp for his awesome ability to herd eight cats. And I know it wasn't easy. We all have rings under our eyes from lack of sleep. We're all very exhausted. But I think at the end of the day we will come to some agreement. I'm not actually having a kum-by-ya moment right now. I'm not jumping up and down feeling like I need to hold hands and pretend like what we ended up with is what I believe personally was the right way to go. As a matter of fact, I was listening to Councilmember Andrews say that we've come to some significant savings, at \$20 million to me is not significant in a \$4.2 billion budget. And when you sort of





spread that out among all homeowners, taxpayers, in the County, that's not going to be very significant savings. And we had a budget yesterday that I would have much rather voted for, but I'm doing the job that I was elected to do. If this is the compromise, which I want to just tell the truth about this right now -- the compromise was broached before I got the phone call. So I'm going to vote for this. I'm not happy about it. I think that the pulling together of the team, I'm still waiting to see what that really means. It's not been easy. And there are times as the only person of color representing this Council, there are many times when I feel like I have not been afforded the same opportunity to play ball. And so I just want to be honest with people about that this morning. And my final comments on this budget are something that I would like to leave to all the 30,000 employees who serve us with great distinction every single day, and it comes from Psalms 35; and in it Isaiah said, "For anger is for but a moment. His favor is for life. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning. Now in my prosperity I say I shall not be moved. We shall not be moved."

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President Knapp.

Thank you. Councilmember Elrich.

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Councilmember Elrich.

I was one of those who voted against the budget yesterday. And I said in closing that I hoped that everybody would spend the next few hours listening and thinking about what everybody had said, and try to find and come to some common ground. And I'm glad that a lot of us stayed around and kept bouncing ideas off each other, sometimes arguing with each other. George and I had some exchanges yesterday afternoon.

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Councilmember Leventhal,

You had to go and put that on the record?

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Councilmember Trachtenberg,

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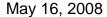
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Councilmember Elrich,

But the reality is we talked to each other and we listened to each other that people didn't say, I'm not talking to this person because that person is in a different point -- has a different point of view. People kept going at each other and walking in and out of rooms. And I thought that was a good thing. I thought that this Council was wrestling with a couple of principles yesterday. One is the obligation to employees. And I felt and said from the beginning that I felt obligated to fund the contracts because if the Council didn't like the contracts we shouldn't have funded them last year. We had a chance to reject them. We didn't' reject them. And I felt that that was opportunity to say no, if we were going to say no. We didn't say no. And it wasn't like we weren't warned that this year

- 41 was not going to be a picnic. We were told by the Executive that this year was not going 42
- 43 to be a picnic. So we got the non-picnic situation and the problems we wanted. I think 44
 - the other obligation was the taxpayers to try to structure a more sustainable budget.





And I think there are -- people certainly had in mind how are we going to make sure this 1 2 budget is more sustainable going on. And I agree with Valerie. The \$20 million doesn't 3 guarantee anything; \$20 million is not going to be the difference that we're facing next 4 year in the budget. I think we'd all be relieved right now and not even thinking, talking 5 about next year if all we thought was there was going to be a \$20 million difference next year. I think all of us expect it to be a lot greater. So I was glad that at the end of the day 6 we came out with something that met the obligation to employees and moved us in the 7 8 direction of a more sustainable budget. I felt really conflicted and I'm more than willing 9 to admit to some of schizophrenia about this. I thought some services got cut too 10 deeply. And I thought that we didn't initiate new programs and directions that I think a lot 11 of us would like to go in. There's been a lot of talk, for example, about what we need to 12 do in the early childhood area. And it's certainly going to require more funding than what 13 we've put out there to date. And our initiatives right now are rather limited in that. And at the same time, there weren't some of the structural changes I thought could have 14 occurred in this budget, and that I hope occur by the time we get to the next budget. 15 16 And I didn't think the budget provided as much tax progressivity as I would have liked. Twenty-four hours does make a difference. I think, you know, some of the tax 17 progressivity has been restored to the budget. I think that we met the principles that 18 19 many of us had. And sometimes when those principles conflicted with each other, we 20 did find a way to work ourselves out of it. I think that it's important to note that the 21 property tax relief is as much at the bottom as it is at the top, and will be felt very 22 strongly in the neighborhoods not in Potomac and Avondale and that part of the world, 23 but it will be felt very strongly in the neighborhoods of Silver Spring and Wheaton and 24 elsewhere, where the increases that were originally proposed by the committee would 25 have been much more -- felt much more deeply by those with much less means to pay 26 for them. And so I think, you know, we provided more relief for folks in that area. And I 27 think that's a good thing. I hope that the message to the Executive and the school side is that we don't want to see items from the reconciliation list brought back as the cuts 28 29 that we talked about when we said we wanted to find \$8 million in savings. I think the 30 view of the Council is that we really are looking for structural changes, not simply 31 bouncing the reconciliation list back to [inaudible]. If we had wanted the cuts off the 32 reconciliation, we would have made the cuts off the reconciliation list. We didn't do that. 33 And I thought that was because the arguments made by the Ed Committee and the 34 other committees made on the reconciliation list were good arguments. I hope that on at 35 least our side of the County that the Executive finds a way to clone Art Wallenstein. I feel obligated to call him out again because I thought his solution to the problem in the 36 37 Corrections Department and how he achieved his savings is the way things ought to be 38 done in the County. He looked at two vacancies and he didn't say, how quickly could I fill the vacancies; he said, it is possible to redistribute the workload from those two 39 40 vacancies to existing jobs so I don't have to fill those vacancies. And he found a way to 41 do it. And that was the creative, sensible approach that allowed us to achieve budget 42 savings and continue the job of County Government. No services were lost. No 43 diminution of what we try to provide our citizens was required. He saved money and he 44 did it, I think, in a sensible way. So if you guys can clone Art and use him to, you know,



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provide advice in general in how things should be done, I think it's a good thing. I will be voting for this budget today. It is -- I think all of us agree it's not the perfect budget, but it's a better budget I think than the one we were looking at yesterday by some margin. And that margin is sufficient, I think, for all of us to come together and say this is where we want to go forward this year. So I'm happy to be voting for it.

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President Knapp,

Thank you very much. And that's it. No, I just wanted to close by saying you've heard everyone say we stayed late. We worked hard. And that's good. We didn't do anything that was all that different than from what you do every day. We'd had diverse, complex views. We worked together. We brought those views together to hopefully achieve a common good. And that's what you guys are addressing in our community each and every day, and most people are. And that's one of the things I think makes this community so exciting. So we did work hard, and we did do good things. We're not necessarily unique in that. And everybody is doing that in government and in our private sector of Montgomery County each and every day. Through the course of my career the one thing that has always been important to me is to take care of your people. I find if you do that everything else works. And I think with what we've put here now, we are doing that; we are taking care of our people. And I think that's the important thing for us. And so I appreciate everyone's efforts. And with that we have a motion before us on the -- a straw vote on the aggregate Operating Budget for FY09. Seeing no further discussion, all in support indicate by raising your hand. That is unanimous. Thank you very much. We are adjourned.

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